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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a model of interprofessional assistance and mentoring used to orient new staff members in a special education program. The mentoring model calls for three basic dispositions: opening ourselves, leading incrementally, and expressing care and concern. All mentors attempt to manifest the three dispositions as they relate to the needs of the new teacher and as they engage in mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending) and activities (demonstrations, observations and feedback, and support meetings). As the induction process begins, the new staff person starts a personal growth portfolio. Initially, the portfolio contains mechanical checklists of primary resource persons in each program area. As program information is acquired, it is recorded in the portfolio. Eventually, the portfolio contains a personal, long-term, professional growth plan worked out with supervisor and mentor. The induction process is organized into three phases. The first two, which last a total of 2-6 months, are designed to smooth entry into the system and to bring new staff into contact with as many veteran staff as is possible. In the third phase, the new teacher begins the task of acquiring and fine-tuning the many new skills required in the program, and selects one staff member who will act as mentor and coach. This paper contains a personal growth portfolio checklist for the three induction phases. (SV)

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TEAM ORIENTED MENTORING TO PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF RETENTION

Introduction

This paper is an outline of a "modified" mentoring program. This program, affectionately titled ***"The Tormentor Program"***, attempts to take advantage of the strengths inherent in the Eagle Village program and, at the same time, adhere to the basic principles of mentoring.

Staff Philosophy

During a routine review of the evaluation and professional development sequences the staff adopted as one of its guiding principles the **"Teacher helping Teacher"** philosophy. There was a recognition that we have much to offer to one another in the way of professional assistance. An obligation to share was recognized and accepted by the professional staff. The staff also recognized that it had limited resources and that work loads should be distributed over as many people as possible to lighten the burden.

Program Strengths & Weaknesses

To fully understand the proposed program a brief outline of program strengths and weaknesses is called for. It is necessary to understand both the strengths and the weaknesses of the Eagle Village program because it is from this understanding that a foundation is built for the Mentoring program.

Weaknesses

Involved Staff: Current staff members are already involved in numerous other projects making it difficult to commit extended amounts of time to yet another program.

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Limited Personnel: A small staff does not generate a pool of perspective mentors large enough to prevent overburdening one or two staff members.

Limited Financial Resources: Limited monies prevents the implementation of reward schemes for mentor teachers other rewards will have to be sought.

Strengths

Highly Trained Staff: All staff members have participated in numerous training programs which have been integrated and fully implemented into the curriculum.

Diverse Interests: Each staff member has developed an area of expertise based upon their personal interest which can impact all other staff members.

Well Defined Curriculum: The curriculum is organized in such a manner that new staff can accept it as is or adapt it as they see the need. In either event the goals of the program are not compromised.

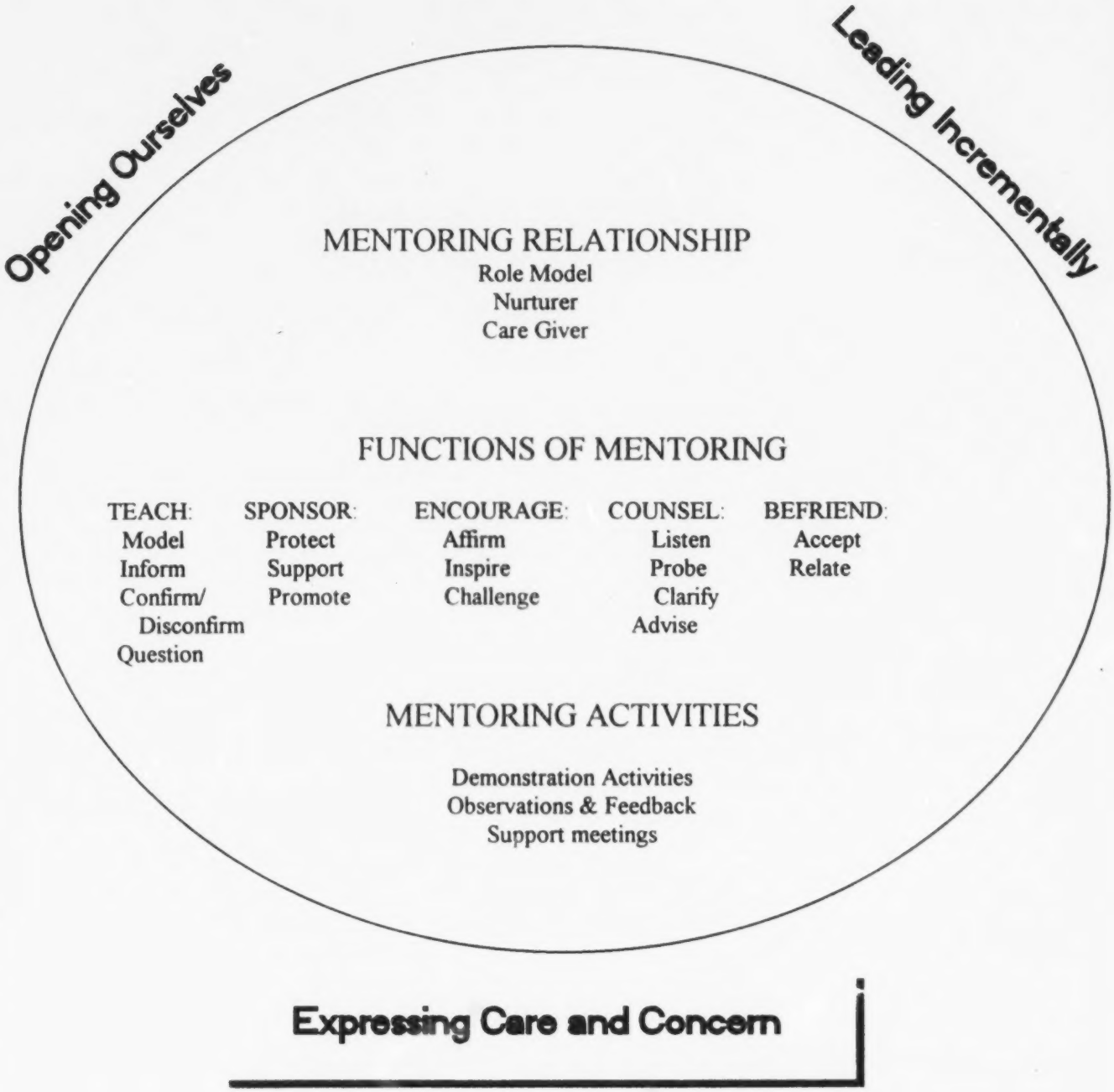
Shared Program Goals: Commitment to Mentoring as one approach to helping new staff. This commitment is shared by all staff at all levels.

Program Design: The daily schedule along with several other features of the daily routine are conducive to allowing a mentoring relationship to flourish.

<u>An Operating Definition of Mentoring</u>

The operating model/definition that will be employed by our program will be that contained in Figure 1. However, it cannot be employed in its purest form because of program limitations. In the case of our small building it seems as though a mentoring program need not be a formal one. However, it is the smallness of the program that calls for more formality. Our personnel resources are limited and are already stressed in many different directions. Therefore, a formal conceptualization that distributes the work load evenly while accomplishing the primary goal is called for. The conceptualization put forth in Figure 1 by Anderson and Shannon holds the necessary keys to determine the appropriate direction.

MENTORING MODEL
Figure I



The Mentoring Model proposed in Fig. 1 calls for three basic dispositions: Opening Ourselves, Leading Incrementally, and expressing Care and Concern. These dispositions can further be viewed as being on a continuum. While, in an ideal sense, some people are capable of manifesting all of the characteristics listed in Figure 1 all of the time. It is more reasonable to assume that all people can manifest some of the characteristics listed most of the time. Taking advantage of those characteristics that each individual is capable of giving at any one time should be a hallmark of our program. In this view it is essential that everyone in the program share the same conceptual understanding of mentoring because they must be prepared to enter into the process at anytime contributing whatever they have to give at that time.

All teaching staff will be called upon to enter into a mentoring relationship with new staff staff will attempt to manifest the 3 dispositions as they relate to the needs of the new teacher. In addition staff will attempt to work cooperatively with the new teacher engaging in the Functions and Activities listed in Figure 1 as they see their appropriateness.

TEAM ORIENTED MONITORING APPROACH FOR NEW STAFF

The Goal

The primary goal of the ***"Tormentor"*** program is to fully integrate new staff into the Eagle Village delivery system as an effective team member. Further, the approach has as its primary goals the initial professional development of new staff leading to the granting of tenure and to provide a basis for future professional growth. Since the ***"Tormentor"*** is a formative program Evaluation will not solely be based on ***"Tormentor"***. However, the components of "Tormentor" will provide a foundation upon which the evaluation process begins.

The Plan

Initially, all staff will take part in the induction process of a new staff person. This will be accomplished by listing all of those critical or 'must know' items and assigning one or more staff persons to be responsible for their delivery or to act as a "Primary Resource Person". Items on the list will be divided into three phases with each phase being defined by the 'need to know' priority. The phases are as follows:

PHASE I--1st few days/weeks

Designed to get the new teacher started initial activities aims at smoothing the beginning days of work and integrating the new person into the system.

PHASE II--1st 2-6 months

Begins to develop more depth and understanding of program and deliver.

PHASE III--on going through out first two years

Develops a greater understanding of program elements which enhance overall teaching and personal professional development.

As the process begins the new staff person will start a personal growth portfolio. Initially, the portfolio will contain the mechanical checklists containing the list of primary resource persons who can answer their questions. When they acquire needed information they will record its acquisition in their portfolio. Eventually, their portfolios will contain personal professional growth plans worked out with the supervisor and their mentor which will be of a long term nature.

The first two phases are designed not only to smooth the entry into the system but also to bring the new staff into contact with as many veteran staff as is possible. Making these initial contacts insures that the new staff will get to interact with all staff and begin the process of developing a series of relationships.

In Phase III the new teacher begins the task of acquiring and fine tuning the many new skills required in the program. The new teacher begins the process of selecting one staff member who will act as a mentor and a coach. The new teacher will continue to interact with veteran staff who are serving as the Primary Resource Person for a particular subject area. It is the responsibility of the Primary Resource Person to develop and maintain a set of materials on their subject area that can be shared by all and to act as an in-house trainer for that subject.

PERSONAL GROWTH PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

PHASE I	CONTACT PERSON	SIGNATURE/DATE

1. Tour of School-
   finding needed material
2. Tour of Village
3. Building Procedures
4. Class Schedules
5. Discipline
6. Corporal Punishment
7. Daily Ratings
8. Program Philosophy
9. Curriculum Design- Course Outlines

PHASE II CONTACT PERSON SIGNATURE/DATE

1. How Village Runs/ Meet Village Staff
2. Relationship With Village
3. IEPC Process
4. Updating And Report Cards
5. Pre/Post Test Issues
6. Sub Procedures
7. Incident Reports How/When
8. How To Use Your Aid
9. Staff Meetings
10. Student Relationships
11. Dress Issues
12. Selecting A Primary Mentor

PHASE III CONTACT PERSON SIGNATURE/DATE

1. Cooperative Learning
2. PSI/DM
3. Life Choices
4. Logical Thinking
5. Effective Teaching Issues
6. Evaluation Procedures
7. Peer Coaching
8. Teaching Techniques
9. Establishing Area of Expertise

This project has attempted to address a need. Further, while not elaborating, it has done so within a philosophical framework which compliments the current program. Many program features, such as Personal Growth Portfolios and Peer Coaching, are already integral parts of the program. This plan/project appears to be a logical extension to those components already in use.

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